

# The relationship between motivational orientations and Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency level

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## **Abstract**

The present study investigated the possible relationship between motivation orientation and Iranian EFL learners' proficiency level. To do so, 60 out of 80 Iranian EFL learners were selected through an Oxford Placement Test from a private language institute. They were divided into two groups (intermediate male and female learners). Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was used to examine its relationship with learners' proficiency level. In addition, this questionnaire was used to compare gender and L2 factors of motivation. The results showed that there was a positive significant relationship between the participants' motivation and their English proficiency level. In other words, the higher the motivation to learn English, the higher will be their English proficiency. Moreover, the performance of females was better than males in most factors. Finally, the present study provided few some implications for language teachers and syllabus designers.

**Keywords:** motivation; gender; language proficiency level; Iranian EFL learners

## **The relationship between motivational orientations and Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency level**

### **1. Introduction**

The process of second and foreign language learning is necessary, demanding and challenging in human life and it has been increasing across the world. Moreover, in recent decades, the learning of English language is considered as a widespread need and an essential part of the globalization process (Harmer, 2001). In this regard, for being a successful learner, Ellis (1994) highlighted the influence and significant role of motivation in the process language learning of students. Following the same idea, Gardner (2000) considered motivation as one of the major and influential factors that have an effect on the success of second and foreign language learning. Various studies have shown that those learners who have higher motivation are more successful in their L2 learning (e.g., Ely, 1986; Ellis, 1994; Gardner, 2000). According to Wlodowski (1985), motivation is as “the processes that can (a) arouse and motivate behavior, (b) give direction or behavior purpose, (c) continue to permit behavior to insist, and (d) lead to select or preferring a specific behavior” (p. 2).

Numerous researches have been conducted about the relationship between language learners' motivation and language proficiency (Ahmadi, 2011; Jannati & Marzban, 2014; Lee & Oh, 2011; Samad, Etemadzadeh, & Roohbakhsh far, 2012). Regarding the role of motivation in the language learning process, the relationship between motivating factors and proficiency level in terms of different variables (e.g. gender) has not been considered very much (Jannati & Marzban, 2014). Furthermore, demotivating factors are the counterparts of motivating factors and have harmful effects on learners' foreign language learning consequences (Aliakbari & Hemmatizad, 2015). Also, studying on the relationship among motivation, gender and language proficiency of language learning is a vital accountability of language teachers, investigators, and anyone who is somehow related to language learning and teaching process (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011). They founded that lack of attention on different aspects of motivation on different sides of language learning such as language proficiency and language achievement.

Given the importance of learners' motivation and language proficiency, it seems to be imperative to raise EFL instructors' awareness concerning the possible relationship between motivation and EFL language proficiency. Hence, in view of the present situation of teaching English in Iran, and also due to the paucity of research concerning the different aspects of motivation on different sides of language learning such as language proficiency and language achievement, there is a need to conduct this study. Perhaps, findings of this research can be used to demonstrate the Iranian EFL teachers the possible correlation of these two vital variables that have constantly been shown to be necessary for EFL learners' language success. Hence, the purpose of the current study was twofold. Primarily, this research intended to determine whether there is any statistically significant correlation motivation and proficiency level of Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, it was the intention of this study to specify whether there is any statistically correlation between motivation and Iranian EFL male versus female learners' proficiency level. To meet the objective of the study following research questions were formulated:

- RQ1: Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency and their motivation to learn English?
- RQ2: Is there any significant difference between motivational factors and participants' gender?

Null hypotheses were considered to answer above mentioned questions are as follows:

- H01: There is no significant relationship between motivation and EFL language learners' proficiency level.

- H02: There is no significant difference between motivational factors and participants' gender.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Motivation and language learning

Motivation is a basic and essential part of learning (Brewer & Burgess, 2005). Gardner (2014) believes that with the intention of being motivated, the learner necessitates, requires, and needs to have something to anticipate, foresee, expect and long for, a reason, principle, or rationale having to do with aim or target. Concerning second/foreign language acquisition, this intention would be learning a foreign language. In fact, there must be something that the learner desires to achieve or do, being the target language the vehicle to attain it. Relating to this matter, Ellis (1994, p. 508) says that “language teachers readily acknowledge the importance of learners’ motivation, not infrequently explaining their own sense of failure with reference to their students’ lack of motivation”.

Cook (2000) states that acquisition of language is not the same among learners. He also believes that there are three main factors which influence the Second Language Acquisition. These three factors are: age, personality and motivation. Motivation is the most significant factor among the mentioned three factors that affect second language acquisition. Ellis (1994, p. 715) suggests that motivation is “the effort which learners put into learning an L2 as a result of their need or desire to learn it”. Also, Lightbown and Spada (2001, p. 33) identify motivation in SLA as an intricate incident which can be identified along with two factors: “learners’ communicative needs and their attitudes towards the second language community”. They believe that when learners think that they need to speak the second language with the aim of being in touch with others or accomplishing and achieving specialized desires and goals, they will be motivated to obtain expertise and skill in it. Research has proved that whether second language learning is successful or not directly and strongly concerns with these types of motivation (Lightbown & Spada, 2001).

***Empirical studies on motivation and language proficiency*** - In this section, the related studies about the role of motivation on language proficiency are reviewed. Dashtizadeh and Farvardin (2016) investigated on the mediating effect of perfectionism on the relationship between language learning and foreign language achievement. In so doing, 400 eleventh grade high school students from different cities of Iran (i.e., Tehran, Ahvaz, Semnan, and Kerman) were participated in this study. Two questionnaires were used in this study. The first questionnaire was the shortened form of Gardner’s Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) for EFL learners, and the second one was Almost Perfect Scale-Revised (APS-R) measuring the level of perfectionism among respondents. The findings of the study showed a positive association between all variables.

Jannati and Marzban (2014) conducted a study to investigate on the relationship between motivation in learning and English proficiency level in a sample of 100 Iranian EFL intermediate learners. The instruments used to collect the data included Gardner’s (2004) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) and a shortened version of a paper-based TOEFL test. The results suggested that the highly motivated language learners in this study scored slightly higher on the English proficiency test than did the lower motivated participants and there was a positive significant relationship between the participants’ motivation and their English proficiency. Another study was investigated by (Alrabai, 2014) on the effects of the actual use of motivational strategies in the classroom on learners’ motivation in Saudi Arabia. The researchers carried out the empirical study over two different periods of time. The findings of this study provided strong support for theoretically-grounded claims (e.g. Williams & Burden, 1997) about the effectiveness of motivational strategies in promoting learners’ language motivation.

Samad et al. (2012) conducted a study to investigate the correlation between motivation and language proficiency. The samples were chosen from Iranian EFL students studying in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). Two aspects of motivation (e.g., Instrumental and integrative) were considered in this research. One

hundred Iranian students from different faculties were participated in this study. They were selected based IELTS score. The band score above and below 6 were considered as high achievers and low achievers, respectively. Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was employed to collect the data. The findings of the study showed that high achievers' language proficiency associated well with integrative motivation. In other words, the results suggest that high achievers second language learners were highly integrative motivated.

A study was carried out by (Vaezi, 2008) on Iranian's undergraduate students' motivation toward learning English as a foreign language. Seventy nine Iranian non-English major students were participated in this study. A modified 25-item survey was employed to determine the Iranian's student's tendency towards motivation. The results indicated a very high motivation and positive attitudes towards English language learning. While, Moinvaziri (2007) carried out a study to examine motivational orientation in English Language Learning among Iranian undergraduate students. Data were collected from 255 undergraduate students using the Questionnaire based on Gardner's attitude/motivation test battery (AMTB). The findings of this study revealed that Iranian undergraduate students are highly motivated in both integrative and instrumental orientation.

## 2.2 Gender

One of the important issues in the theoretical and pedagogical assumption in L2 learning is gender. Gender is a concept that is more than only the biological differences a male and a female possess. The difference a boy and a girl have in the classroom is not only a result of difference in chromosomes, but also of the personalities they have, as well as the context and the atmosphere they are in at a certain time. In addition to these social differences, the teacher plays an important role in guiding the pupils in certain directions and building certain stereotypes that can be hard to overcome. A lot of studies showed that gender can have a significant effect on how students learn a language. A large number of studies worked on topics about gender, including language learning ability, motivation, teacher perceptions, learning styles and strategies, classroom interaction, teaching materials, testing and pedagogies. Many studies that examined gender as a variable in the use of language learning strategies (LLS) reported that significant gender differences almost always are the same, and they show greater use of LLS by females (Green & Oxford, 1995; Noguchi, 1991).

**Empirical studies on motivation and gender** - Different studies have been conducted about the role of motivation on different variables in ESL and EFL contexts. In this section, some studies about the role of motivation on gender are reviewed. Shokrpour and Shouraki (2016) examined the relationship between motivation and autonomous language learning. Two motivation and autonomous learning questionnaire were used to collect the data. A total of 97 students [45 (males) and 52 (females)], were participated in this study. The results of the study showed that there was significant and meaningful correlation between motivation and autonomous language learning. Furthermore, regarding gender difference, the study found no significant difference.

Mahdavy (2013) conducted a study to examine the relationship between gender and motivational orientations of Iranian high school students English language learners. The participants of this study were 401[45 (males) and 52 (females)] in the first, second, third and fourth grade of high school. "L2 motivational self-system" questionnaire was employed to collect data the data concerning Students' motivational orientations. The results have shown that "ought-to L2 self", "ideal-L2 self" and instrumental-promotion were significantly higher among the male high school English language learners. Moreover, the differences in the other motivational orientations were not statistically significant.

A study was carried out to examine the effect of integrative and instrumental motivation based on Gardner's socio-educational model on Iranian EFL learners' language learning (Ahmadi, 2011). The finding of the study showed that female learners have stronger integrative motivation than instrumental motivation. On the other hand, male language learners have stronger instrumental orientation. While, Ziahosseini and Salehi (2008) investigated the relationship between motivation and the use of language learning strategies by university

students. Furthermore, variables such as sex, the level of proficiency were also investigated. They found that there was a meaningful relationship between motivation and language learning strategies. However, they found no difference between males and females with regard to strategy choice and language use. Lastly, Meece, Glienk, and Burg (2006) also carried out a study on the relationship between gender and motivation. They found that males had stronger ability and interest beliefs in mathematics and science in general. However, females were more interested in language arts and writing.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Design of the study

The current research is based on a quantitative correlational design. Quantitative research is appropriate if a study investigates the relationship of variables rather than assessing the effect of variables on an outcome variable (Creswell, 2005). In fact, in addition to evaluating the hypotheses, the primary objective of the current study was to discover the relationships between each variable. According to Creswell (2003), in good quantitative research questions and hypotheses, “the investigator may relate one or more independent variables to a dependent variable”. Therefore, the use of the correlational research paradigm is justified for this study, which examines the relationship between the intended variables. Figure 1 below illustrates the basic design for the current correlational study.

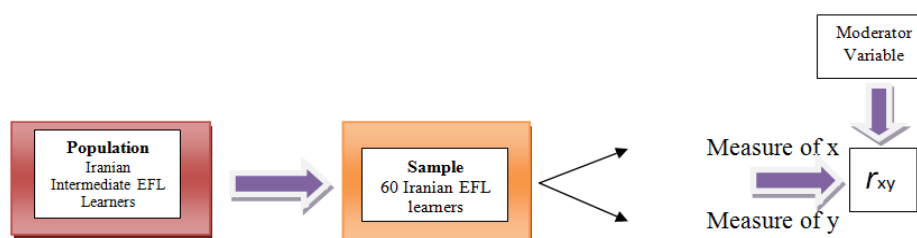


Figure 1. Design of the present correlational study.

Wherein: x= motivating factors (independent variable)  
 y= language learners' proficiency level (dependent variable)  
 r = correlation

In the present study, the independent variable considered in this study was motivating factors and the dependent variable was language learners' proficiency level. Moreover, the moderator variable was learners' gender in this study. In fact, to ensure that the picture is clear within the current study, it was decided to determine what change, if any, gender as the moderator variable could cause in the central relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

#### 3.2 Participants

In order to investigate the extent of relationship between motivation and Iranian EFL male versus female learners' language proficiency level, 60 out of 80 Iranian EFL learners were selected through an Oxford Placement Test (Syndicate, 2001). After giving OPT, those who scored one SD above and below the mean were excluded from the study. To conduct the research, 60 students male (n=30) and female (n=30) were considered to be justifiable. According to Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (2006), correlational studies do not need highly large samples. To find whether a relationship exists, it will be evident in a sample of moderate size (e.g., 50 to 100). The participants were selected from a private language institute in Babol, Mazandaran. The age range of the participants was 16-21. They have studied English for 2 to 3 years in the language school. Their first language was Persian. The demographic data is presented in table 1.

**Table 1***Participant demographic information*

Gender	N	Age Range	Level	Native Language
Male	30	16-21	Intermediate	Persian
Female	30			

### 3.3 Instruments

**Oxford placement test** - To tap participants' level of English language proficiency level, an Oxford Placement Test (Syndicate, 2001) was used to homogenize the participants in the study. The test consisted of reading, vocabulary and grammar sections. The test comprised of 60 questions in two parts. The first part comprised of 40 multiple choice items in 4 sub-parts. Questions 1 to 5, the learners were asked to answer grammatical questions about prepositions. Questions 6 to 10, the learners were asked to read a cloze passage and select one option out of three ones. Questions 11 to 20, they were also asked to read two cloze passages and select one option from four ones. Questions 21 to 40 checked the learners' grammatical knowledge. In the second part of this examination, there were two sub-sections. For questions 41 to 50, the learners required two cloze passages and select the correct option. Questions 51 to 60 tapped learners' vocabulary format. The participants were allotted 45 minutes to answer the questions. The results were categorized based on OPT ranking rubric.

**Attitude/motivation test battery (AMTB)** - In order to collect the data, Gardner's (1985) 104-item AMTB (Attitude, Motivation Test Battery) questionnaire together with a demographical questionnaire was administered to the selected respondents in all 2 English classes. The questionnaire is a 6-point Likert Scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. AMTB items are made of 12 scales measuring 1) Interest in Foreign languages; 2) Parental Encouragement; 3) Motivational intensity; 4) English class anxiety; 5) English teacher evaluation; 6) Attitudes towards learning English; 7) Attitudes towards English-speaking people; 8) Integrative orientation; 9) Desire to learn English; 10) English course evaluation; 11) English use anxiety, and 12) Instrumental Orientation. The English version was given to the language learners.

To calculate the reliability of this questionnaire, 15 EFL learners were chosen and it was calculated through SPSS version 21. The reliability of this questionnaire was taken care of at the piloting stage through the Cronbach's Alpha formula which turned out to be (Questionnaire = .71) To have the most appropriate test, item characteristics, that is item facility and item discrimination were also studied. The time allowed was sixty minutes as determined at the piloting stage.

### 3.4 Procedure

To find a reasonable answer for the research questions, the following steps were taken in the research procedure. In the first phase, two classes of intermediate EFL learners at Shokouh Language Institute were chosen by the researcher non-randomly. The number of the participants was totally 60 (N=60). As it was mentioned before, the learners were admitted in this level through a placement test by the institute. Then, the Oxford Placement Test (Syndicate, 2001) was administered to homogenize the participants. After the test, the ones with the score of one SD below or above the mean were excluded from the study. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, to further ensure the reliability of the test, before the actual study, a pilot study was used to validate the instrument. It was administered to 15 participants male (n= 6) and female (n= 9). The acquired test reliability index was 0.71. Finally, the AMTB questionnaire was spread out among all participants. Sixty minutes assigned to complete the questionnaire. The goal of using motivation questionnaire was to compare two genders (male vs. female) and 12 factors of motivation. For the first research question, the relationship between the scores of participants in the proficiency test and the scores of language learners in motivation questionnaire was considered. For the second research question, the difference between male and female scores' and the scores of participants in motivation questionnaire was calculated.

### 3.5 Data analysis

In order to answer the research questions of the present study, the data was analyzed in the following way: First, The descriptive statistics were calculated. Then, based on the research hypotheses, the researcher tabulated and the data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software, examining correlational statistic, Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson  $r$ ), which is the appropriate inferential statistics. The Pearson correlation measure was used to analyze the results of instrument to determine whether a relationship existed between the two variables. The researcher used SPSS version 21 in analysis of research data.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Result of the first research question

The first research question was to find out how the participants with different levels of motivation performed on the English proficiency test. To this end, the participants were divided into three low-motivation, mid-motivation, and high-motivation groups as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Motivation groups*

Groups	Motivation Scores Range
Low-motivation	460-510
Mid-motivation	510-560
High-motivation	560-624

As shown in the above Table, the participants whose motivation mean scores ranged from 460 to 510 were placed in the low-motivation group, the participants with a motivation mean score of 510 to 560 were put in the mid-motivation group, and the participants whose motivation mean score ranged from 560 to 624 were placed in the high-motivation group. Below table shows the number and the percentage of the participants' in each motivational group. Table 3 shows the number and the percentage of the participants' in each motivational group.

**Table 3**

*Participants' distribution in motivational groups*

Groups	N	%
Low-motivation	14	23.33
Mid-motivation	35	58.33
High-motivation	11	18.33
Total	60	100.00

Based on the results of the above table, low to high-motivation groups are 23.33%, 58.33%, and 18.33%, respectively. In this regard, the majority of the participants were in the mid-motivation group. The low motivation group occupied the second position while the lowest number of the participants was found in the low-motivation group. On the whole, about 82% of participants had a low to medium level of motivation to learn English while only 16.2% were of high motivation to learn English. In other words, the mean score of the participants' English proficiency in the low-motivation group is 23.33, the mean score of the participants' English proficiency in the mid-motivation group is 58.33, and the mean score of the English proficiency in the high-motivation group is 18.33, respectively. The next table reveals the results of the possible correlation between the participants' language proficiency and their level of motivation to learn English.

Concerning the first hypothesis formulated for this study, (i.e. H01: There is no significant relationship between motivation and EFL language learners' proficiency level.) Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to investigate the relationship between Motivation of Iranian EFL learners and their reading

language proficiency. In view of the correlation analysis and Cohen's (1988) benchmarks for its interpretation, it was found that there was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables,  $r = .71$ ,  $n = 60$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with high levels of Motivation associated with high levels of Language proficiency. The results were supportive of rejecting the first null hypothesis.

The value of the correlation between the participants' motivation and their English proficiency is .71, therefore, there is a positive correlation between the two variables. Moreover, the value of the significance level proposes that this correlation is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a positive significant relationship between the participants' motivation and their English language proficiency. Additionally, the coefficient of determination was calculated to estimate the percent of variance that the two variables shared. It became evident that there was a considerable overlap between the two variables. In other words, Motivation and Language proficiency that correlate  $r = .71$  share 56 percent of their variance. That means that Motivation helps to explain nearly 56 percent of the variance in subjects' Language proficiency. This is a quite a respectful amount of variance as compared with the relevant previous research, indicating the practical significance of the correlation.

#### 4.2 Result of the second research question

As for the second null hypothesis (i.e. H02: There is no significant difference between intermediate EFL learners and motivational factors regarding their gender), first, the descriptive statistics of the EFL language learners and motivational factors is presented. Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics of the two groups and motivational factors. In this table, two groups (male= 1 and female= 2) were determined. To see whether there is a significant difference between motivating factors and two groups, independent sample t-test was used. In addition, Pearson correlation test was used to track the relationship between the female and male motivational factors. The results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Comparative difference and correlation between female and male motivational factors*

Scales	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>r</i>	<i>t</i>
1) Interest in English	Male	30	46.36	10.42	.43*	8.13*
	Female	30	49.55	11.64		
2) Parental Encouragement	Male	30	39.5	88.24	.29	.81
	Female	30	40.61	8.03		
3) Motivational Intensity	Male	30	39.12	8.01	.39	1.01*
	Female	30	41.37	8.96		
4) English Class Anxiety	Male	30	39.74	8.37	.44*	7.92*
	Female	30	43.67	10.32		
5) English Teacher Evaluation	Male	30	41.75	8.61	.41*	7.21*
	Female	30	44.82	10.14		
6) Attitudes toward Learning English	Male	30	39.56	8.23	.25	.93
	Female	30	40.12	9.15		
7) Attitudes toward English Speaking	Male	30	42.46	8.23	.41	1.03
	Female	30	43.77	10.01		
8) Integrative Orientation	Male	30	38.86	8.39	.38*	3.89*
	Female	30	40.56	8.83		
9) Desire to Learn English	Male	30	44.59	10.11	.37	.49
	Female	30	44.70	10.13		
10) English Course Evaluation	Male	30	36.94	7.72	.36	1.07
	Female	30	41.58	8.96		
11) English Use Anxiety	Male	30	39.62	8.30	.48*	7.39*
	Female	30	43.04	9.72		
12) Instrumental Orientation	Male	30	37.28	7.82	.53*	11.78*
	Female	30	42.08	9.25		

Note. \* $p < 0.05$



Table 6 indicates the means, standard deviations, correlations and differences between the male and female participants in terms of their motivational factors. According to the table, there were significant differences between the male and female learners with regard to their interest in foreign languages, English class anxiety, English teacher evaluation, integrative orientation, English use anxiety, and instrumental orientation in favor of females ( $p < .05$ ). On the other hand, there was no significant correlation and difference between these two groups according to the results reported for parental encouragement, motivational intensity, attitudes toward learning English, attitudes toward English speaking people, desire to learn English, and English course evaluation ( $p > .05$ ). This table showed that some of the measured motivational factors, but not all of them, are contributing to the female learners' superiority in motivational orientations.

## 5. Discussion

As discussed earlier, Person's product-moment correlation coefficient between the Motivation and the Language proficiency on this sample is  $r = .71$ ,  $n = 60$ ,  $p < .0005$ , indicating a strong relationship between two variables in this study. There is a direct correlation between learners' EFL Language proficiency and Motivation. This result rejects the first null hypothesis and confirms the relationship of Motivation on the EFL learners' Language proficiency. Therefore, it can be concluded that students who have high levels of motivation, are able to develop their proficiency of language.

This finding is in line with the findings of Gardner (1985) who have repeatedly indicated that it is motivation that promotes learners' proficiency level. This result is also consistent with few studies (Arani, 2004; Samad et al., 2012; Delzendehrouy, Zamanian, & Tayyebi, 2014; Jannati & Marzban, 2015; Dashtizadeh & Farvardin, 2016). Based on the findings of Jannati and Marzban's study (2014), language students with higher levels of motivation scored slightly higher on the English proficiency test than did the low-motivated participants. In addition, they found that there was a positive significant relationship between the subjects' motivation and their English proficiency level. In addition, Samad et al. (2012) attempted to investigate the relationship between motivation and language proficiency of Iranian EFL learners studying in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia [UTM]. They founded that high achievers' language proficiency correlated well with integrative motivation and this result was in consistent with the results of the present study. In this regard, they declared that proficiency level is a consequential component in increasing EFL learners' motivation.

In a similar vein, Gardner (2006) claimed that motivated learners expressed effort in achieving their objectives, revealed persistence, and attended to the tasks essential to reach such objectives. Accordingly, Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, and Shimizu (2004) attempted to examine the effectiveness of Japanese learners' motivation in English as an L2, they resulted that those with high motivation tended to communicate more in the classroom and to ask questions or talk to teachers more frequently outside the class.

With respect to the second research question, the results of the present study showed that there were some differences between motivating factors and gender among Iranian intermediate EFL learners to acquire English. Based on the importance of gender's role, it can be mentioned that females were more motivated than males in most of motivational factors. It should be noted that females were better in some factors such as interest in foreign languages, English class anxiety, English teacher evaluation, integrative motivation, English use anxiety and instrumental orientation. The results confirm Bacon and Fienmann's (1992), Ahmadi (2001) and Meece et al.'s study (2006) which indicate that higher levels of motivational factors reported by females as compared to males. They found that females are better than males in two factors: Interest in foreign languages and integrative motivation. Moreover, Suleiman (1993) showed gender-related motivational differences among Arabic ethnicities studying EFL at Arizona State University. He also founded that females' desire to learn English had a more significant effect than males. Females' attitude towards learning English and English speaking people were more positive than males.

Unlike the above-mentioned results, Mahdavy (2013) resulted that the instrumental-promotion were

significantly higher among the male high school English language learners. However, as the related literature shows, the previous researches have shown that the role of gender has not been as conclusive. Some of the research disregard the role of gender in relation to the motivation and learning language (e.g. Sung & Padilla, 1998; Ziahosseini & Salehi, 2008; Shokrpour & Shouraki, 2016). All in all, gender difference plays an important role in language learning on behalf of females.

## 6. Conclusion and implications

For the success of second or foreign language learning, motivation is one of the essential and personal factors. The results of this study showed that the highly motivated language learners scored higher on the English proficiency test than did the low-motivated participants. In other words, when a learner has a high motivation level, he/she can learn better and can have a better performance. Therefore, this study empirically investigated the second/foreign language learners' motivation factors and gender difference. The result showed that female participants had higher motivation in learning English than their male peers. It is also worth noting that the female learners were better than male learners in some elements such as interest in foreign languages and English teacher evaluation and so on. It can be concluded that motivation can be different from male and female learners.

These conclusions are of immense significance for all those individuals who work as educational planners, teachers, parents and learners in educational contexts. A few educational implications of the conclusions of this study have been presented:

1) By probing into the male and female particular motivational patterns and factors, language instruction can be geared up to learners' interests. In this regard, language learning content can serve to prepare the learners for more autonomous kind of learning a foreign language.

2) Neglect of attitude and motivational factors can trouble students in language learning. The studies have shown that even brilliant and talented students with low attitude and motivation have achieved little progress. So the teachers and educators should handle the techniques and strategies applied in their classes in a way that can immerse students in language learning.

3) Students' sense of competence is enhanced when teachers provide support through instruction in strategies, skills, and satisfaction of relatedness needs enhances student interest, participation, and academic effort (Wentzel, 1997). In this regard, language teachers should pay attention to this construct.

4) Teachers should help learners to create a relaxed atmosphere in the class, motivate learners by choosing topics that interest students and not teachers, set up a conducive environment with relevant and interesting activities, let learners give their own opinion/position, challenge them so that they can persuade their readers appropriately and pave the way for them to evaluate and assess and help them to communicate.

5) Gender differences should be taken into consideration in the language classroom. In other words, it should be understood that each gender has unique characteristics and different motivating factors.

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